

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 08572 122234Z
ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8572

USICA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: N/A
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN REQUEST FOR SEMINARS ON PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
OF GOVT

REF: LAGOS 6239 (NOTAL)

1. THE AGENCY WILL RECALL THE PROGRAMATIC SUGGESTIONS PUT FORWARD IN REFTEL. CONSISTENT WITH THESE SUGGESTIONS, THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE POLITICAL DIVISION OF THE CABINET OFFICE REQUESTING OUR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING A SERIES OF SEMINARS TO EXAMINE THE WORKINGS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

2. THE NOTE MAKES CLEAR THAT UNDER THE NEW NIGERIAN PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM IT WILL BE NECESSARY "TO REORIENT THE THINKING OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN LINE WITH THE NEW SYSTEM. THE NEED TO BEGIN TO EDUCATE BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS ON THE WORKING OF A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM BECOMES EVEN MORE OBVIOUS IF IT IS REMEMBERED THAT THE PRESENT PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM IN PRACTICE HAS ITS OWN SPECIAL ORIENTATION AND CERTAINLY WOULD BE FOUND WANTING UNDER A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT." NOTE CITES NEED TO EXPOSE OFFICIALS TO MAJOR IDEAS OF PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM AND THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL NORMS THAT PERMIT IT TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY.

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3. SUCH A PROJECT, OF COURSE, BULKS HIGH IN TERMS OF MISSION AND POST OBJECTIVES. AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH CABINET OFFICE OFFICIALS REGARDING SPECIALISTS IN THESE AREAS, WE WOULD HOPE THE AGENCY WOULD BE ABLE TO RESPOND. ACCORDING TO A SCHEDULE ATTACHED TO THE NOTE, SEMINARS WOULD BE HELD DURING THE PERIOD AUGUST 17-31 AT FIVE LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. ADDITIONALLY, NOTE

INDICATES THAT EMBASSIES OF THE COUNTRIES OF SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, IVORY COAST AND TANZANIA HAVE ALSO BEEN APPROACHED DUE TO THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM.

4. INITIALLY, THE NOTE LAYS OUT THREE GENERAL AREAS OF CONCERN FOR THE SEMINARS:

A) THE POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT;

DO) FEDERALISM AND THE SEPARATION OF POWERS;

C) THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM.

FYI: WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER SUBJECT AREA, WE WILL HAVE TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT RELATES TO THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE SYSTEM OR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES.

5. WE HAVE SECURED AN APPOINTMENT ON JULY 14 TO DISCUSS AT GREATER LENGTH THE IMPORT OF THE NOTE AND WILL BE BETTER PREPARED AFTER THAT TIME TO INFORM THE AGENCY OF ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS CABLE IS TO ALERT THE AGENCY TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT WE MAY BE CALLED UPON WITH SHORT NOTICE TO DEVELOP SUCH A PROGRAM.

LEWIS

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NNN

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